

The Weekly Fishing News

August 28, 2020

Cordova

Alaska

Hello everyone and welcome back to another week of the Cordova Ranger District's Weekly Fishing News! This week I've been thinking about a way to sum up how things are looking on the streams and rivers of Copper River Delta, and how the Coho Salmon run is progressing and have settled on a simple statement: They're here!

Local weather has remained cool and overcast, with scattered rain most of the week. These periodic pulses of water downstream have moved fresh fish up from the saltwater, while still keeping conditions favorable for anglers. The result is that I, and pretty much everyone to whom I've spoken, haven't had much trouble finding salmon willing to take a hook. This news comes as a welcome relief after a very disappointing Coho season last year, and a tough Sockeye Salmon season this spring.



A picture sent in by Terry Roelofs, of a beautiful Coho landed in 2017. If you're not able to make it to Cordova to fish this year, feel free to share a picture from past seasons or maybe even your first visit. We will try to include these memories in the WFN throughout the season!

Coho have already moved up in good numbers through the portions of Eyak River and Ibeck Creek accessible on foot. Recent clear water conditions have kept several colors and varieties spinners and flies productive. Late in the week, after catching a few beautiful chrome-bright Coho on conventional spinning tackle, I switched to a favorite 8wt fly rod

to see if I could get that drag to sing. Several patterns seemed to attract the fish's attention, but a heavy orange Clouser Minnow finally seemed like the one that they wanted to hit.

The action on Alaganik Slough sounds like it is heating up, with reports of Coho being caught throughout the system up past the 22 Mile Bridge. There have also been fish moving up into 18 Mile Creek from Alaganik, so watch out for that system to start getting

productive a couple weeks ahead of normal. For those folks fishing lower Alaganik or walking the trail upstream of the boat launch, try to focus your efforts on the high points of the tide cycle. New fish moving upstream tend to come in with the tide, which brings up more fish that haven't seen a lure yet. Watch out if you are fishing on foot though; small sloughs you easily cross at low tide can be over your head a couple of hours later at high tide when you are trying to cross carrying your limit of salmon home! Remember, high tide at Alaganik is about 2 hours later than the time listed in the tide book.

Speaking of carrying your limit of salmon home... we strongly encourage people fishing places like Eyak River, Ibeck Creek, 18 Mile Creek, or Alaganik Slough to pack out fish whole and clean them away from the streams. Throwing carcasses back into these streams are a major bear attractant and we want to do everything possible to avoid any bear/human conflicts. A couple of years ago a poor blueberry crop brought bears in high densities to most of the popular fishing areas, where bears were able to easily feed on carcasses thrown in the water. The close proximity of people and bears led to several incidents with habituated animals over the course of the season. Please, do your part to keep both people and the bears safe and take those salmon to a designated cleaning station in the Cordova harbor or Fleming Spit to clean!

Good Luck and I'll see you on the water!

--Dan



A fresh Coho Salmon fillet on the cleaning station table at Fleming Spit. Using designated cleaning stations instead of filleting streamside helps minimize human/bear conflicts.

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